



USDA Forest Service
Inyo National Forest
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo>

351 Pacu Lane
Bishop, CA 93514



USDI Bureau of Land Management
Bishop Field Office
www.blm.gov/office/bishop-field-office

November 7, 2023

BLM File Code: 4700 (CA-170.10) R
Inyo File Code: 1560/1950/2360

CERTIFIED MAIL #
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear Reader:

The Inyo National Forest (INF) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Bishop Field Office are initiating a 30-day external scoping period and are seeking public input in preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) for a proposed gather and removal of excess wild horses that are located outside the Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory (MPWHT) (Map 1).

The purpose of the proposed project would be to 1) gather and remove wild horses from public lands outside the MPWHT in areas not designated for their long-term management, and 2) to remove wild horses from private lands at the landowner's request.

The proposed gathers are needed for multiple reasons, including:

- Protection of resources on public and private lands from undue or unnecessary degradation associated with wild horses,
- Protection of proposed critical habitat for the Bi-State distinct population segment (DPS) of greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*),
- Maintaining sustainable wild horse herd management levels,
- Addressing public safety concerns along highways/roadways, and
- Managing horses and burros in accordance with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, as amended (Public Law 92-195).

The Inyo National Forest is the lead agency for the MPWHT and manages for a wild horse herd size of 184 horses with a fluctuation of 25% above or below (138 to 230 animals as per the Land Management Plan for the Inyo National Forest, 2019). A 2020 census of the MPWHT and areas surrounding counted approximately 654 horses, which is at least three times the appropriate management level (AML), with 76% of those horses being outside of the established Territory.

The 30-day public scoping period is from November 7, 2023 to December 7, 2023. We would prefer comments to be submitted via ePlanning website at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2026934/510>. Comments may also be submitted via mail to: 351 Pacu Lane, Bishop, CA 93514, or via email: BLM_CA_Bishop_MPWHT@blm.gov. Written comments must be postmarked on or before December 7, 2023.

Should you have any questions or access issues, email BLM_CA_Bishop_MPWHT@blm.gov.



Privacy notice: before including address, phone number, email-address, or any other personal identifying information in your comments, be advised that your entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While individuals may request that the INF/BLM withhold personal identifying information from public view, the INF/BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so. If you wish us to withhold your personal information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Heller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Stephanie Heller
Mono Lake District Ranger

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherri Lisius". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Sherri Lisius
Bishop Field Manager